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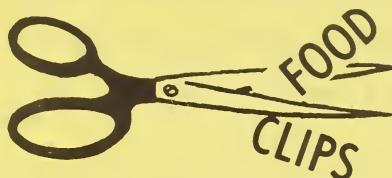
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Food and Home Notes

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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Grade B eggs are probably just as good to eat (as Grade A) -- But, their whites are thinner and their yolks may be flatter, according to marketing specialists at the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

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Watch for bargains in the smaller-sized eggs. If the price difference is more than 7 cents -- remember you get more for your money by buying the smaller sizes.

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Two principle types of plums are purple plums and green-yellow plums (sometimes called Green Gage or Yellow Egg). Purple plums usually are not peeled and usually neither type is pitted. Both types are canned.

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Savers tips: whole fruits or halves or slices of similar size cost more than mixed pieces of various sizes and shapes.

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Freezing your own vegetables? Either dry or brine pack may be used to freeze vegetables according to Home Economists at the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

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FAMILY LIVING SESSIONS

---Set at Outlook Conference

"Implications for Family Living" -- U.S. World Agriculture and Economic Situation will be the topic for a panel discussion opening the Family Living Session on Tuesday, Dec. 10th (3:30 p.m.) of the National Agricultural Outlook Conference. This part of the program, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, will be held at various locations in and around USDA, 14th and Independence Ave. S.W., Washington, D.C.

Included, this year, in the Family Living Sessions (Tuesday-Thursday) will be information on energy, health, nutrition, budgeting, and consumer protection.

The final session (on Thursday) will feature a panel on "Implementing Outlook Information" -- an overview on how to use these sources. This program is open to the public. First session is set in the Jefferson Auditorium on Monday, Dec. 9 at 9 a.m. -- South Bldg. U.S. Department of Agriculture.

UNCONVENTIONAL SOURCES

- - - of Protein

What is "single-cell" protein? It's derived from unicellular or simple multicellular organisms such as yeast, bacteria, fungi, and protozoa. It is the only potential food that is completely independent of agricultural inputs, climatic conditions, and soil quality, according to a report by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Small microbial organisms producing single-cell protein (SCP) have been grown probably for a thousand years on a variety of materials, or substrates, including molasses, liquors, brewery wastes, petroleum fractions, natural and industrial gases, and food industry, dairy, and paper and pulp wastes. Some people are repelled by the thought of eating foods grown on industrial waste materials, or even livestock products which use SCP as a feed supplement. On the other hand, since SCP has been around for years in some form -- fermented food contains bacteria, yeast, and other microbial cells. Some popular examples of this includes cheeses, beer and other alcoholic beverages, yogurt, soy sauce, and vinegar.

What is the future of SCP? For some years to come the cost and safety of SCP cultivation makes it unlikely that it will become more than animal feed. At this time, it is not competitive with other protein sources, but in the future, it may be one of the answers to the world's need for protein.

ENERGY TIP -- Will a shower or a bath help the energy problem? A shower, of course! The average tub bath uses 10 to 15 gallons of hot water the average shower only 8 to 12 gallons. You can even trim that figure lower by turning the shower off while soaping yourself. You'll save on water and the energy to take to heat it, according to Woodsy Owl of the U.S.D.A.'s Forest Service -- the power you save will help clean the air.

HOLIDAY MEALS

----Things to Consider

If you're planning on serving cold cuts for your New Year's Eve buffet -- make sure that they are fresh and chilled! Don't allow them to stand at room temperature too long, warns nutritionist Dr. Evelyn Spindler of the Extension Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Use several trays of food so that one may be left in the refrigerator until the first one is used -- then bring out the fresh tray. This way, meats will stay cold and bacteria will not have a chance to grow.

If you're serving salads -- shrimp, chicken or the like -- remember, they are highly perishable. Pack the serving dish in cracked ice -- or, use smaller serving dishes and refill often from the refrigerator. Deviled eggs, cheese, and sour cream dip all must be kept cold. Set them on molds of ice and be safe.

Serving eggnog? A punch bowl of eggnog that stands for hours at room temperature is a fine breeding place for bacteria. Eggnog should be chilled, and, be sure to replace the supply often.

On holidays -- when large groups get together -- it is not unusual to run out of refrigerator space and become careless with your food. Remember, bacteria can cause food poisoning and it grows in the right combinations of time, temperature, and moisture. The real cause of many food problems today may be the food that is not properly handled, prepared, or served. This can be prevented.

All perishable foods such as cream pies, seafoods, and dishes made with eggs, fish, meat and poultry should be kept COLD (below 40° F). Do NOT let these foods stand at room temperature more than 2 hours. Keep hot foods at a temperature above 140° F.

Holiday food fare is fun -- but careful planning is important!

DRY BEANS

----Worth Their Weight!

Once upon a time beans were worth their weight in gold -- or so the story goes. According to legend -- the jeweler's "carat" owes its origin to a pea-like bean on the East Coast of Africa. And, today, dry beans are worth their weight in protein.

According to Marketing Specialists at the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Marketing Service, dry beans -- in good supply this month -- are among the oldest of foods and considered "staples" for millions of people. The bean family dates back to 7,000 B.C. in the Middle East with some varieties and 5,000 B.C. in Mexico with others.

There are about thirteen thousand species in the bean family including peas, lentils, chick-peas, soybeans, and common-beans, such as the cream-colored ones, red, black, and mottled adzuki beans of the Orient and the various ones of Europe, the Middle East and the kidney, red, lima, navy, black, and pinto beans of our region.

Dry beans even have a political tale to tell. During the age of the Romans, balloting was done with beans -- one color for approval and another for a negative vote. Dry beans are considered a high energy, body-building food that can be used as a partial substitute for higher priced protein foods. They're easy to cook -- they freeze well -- and are easy to store -- they also fit into almost any meal-planning situation.

NOTE: Additional information for the MEDIA and photographs (when applicable) may be obtained from: Shirley Wagener, Editor of Food and Home Notes, Room 535-A, Office of Communication/Press Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250. Or telephone: 202-447-5898.
